

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Agenda Item 6

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Third Sector Recession Action Plan 2009
Date of Meeting: Tuesday 2nd June 2009
Report of: Acting Director Strategy & Governance
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 A Third Sector Recession Action Plan is being developed to contain a package of measures to support voluntary and community groups in the city at a time when their income is likely to fall and demand on their services is likely to increase.
- 1.2 The expected outcome of the Plan will be a more resilient third sector, better prepared to survive the economic downturn and to rise to new opportunities when they arise.
- 1.3 The Plan is being developed in partnership with the voluntary and community sector through the Community & Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) and members of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:
 - (1) Endorse the development of a Third Sector Recession Action Plan in partnership with the CVSF and the LSP.
 - (2) Instructs officers to bring the draft Plan back to the Commission for comment and Member input prior to its agreement.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council has already begun supporting the third sector with some early priorities funded and implemented through 2008/09 council contingency funds in the discretionary grants budget.
- 3.2 In March 2009 the council invested £75k from discretionary grants in the following ways:
- Expanded **debt advice** services to residents delivered by local third sector advice agencies;
 - **Specialist capacity building** support for local voluntary organisations and social enterprises, including specialist Human Resource (HR) support;
 - Promotion of local **Credit Union** savings and loans to help keep residents out of the hands of loan sharks and provide small scale savings accounts;
 - Developing the city **volunteering strategy** to consult with businesses on employee volunteering, the diversification of skills and the feasibility of using volunteering to develop temporary secondments.
- 3.3 The resource implications of implementing further proposals will be considered as part of the future development of the plan with the third sector, council and LSP partners over the summer of 2009

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Officers in the council, third sector and LSP will be consulted on the contents of the plan in order to gather evidence and generate ideas.
- 4.2 The local third sector, through the Community & Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) are hosting a specialist consultative conference on the recession on June 11th 2009 with input from Cllr Dee Simson and council officers.
- 4.3 A draft of the Plan will be shared with members, overview and scrutiny and LSP partners in the summer.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 £75k of discretionary grants contingency funds were spent on early actions to support the third sector in March 2009. Financial implications of implementing the Plan will be considered as part of the development of the plan with over the summer of 2009.

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 These will be considered when the action plan is at a more advanced stage.

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Actions to promote equalities issues were included in the contingency spend in March 2009 and will be prioritised in the development of the action plan over the summer of 2009. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken on the Plan before completion later in 2009.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Actions to promote sustainability will be prioritised in the action plan as this is a key aim of supporting the third sector in a recession.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Actions to address crime & disorder will be considered as part of developing the action plan. Crime and disorder can increase in a recession and the third sector has a part to play in mitigating the causes and effects.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Promotion of opportunity will be prioritised in actions for the third sector, both during and coming out of recession. Mechanisms for the appropriate management of associated risk will be addressed in recommendations made as part of the implementation of the plan.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 Recommendations will support a number of council priorities e.g.
- Our Corporate Plan 2008-11
 - LAA Strengthening Communities Indicators NI: 4, 6 & 7

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

None

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

- Our Corporate Plan 2008-11
- LAA Strengthening Communities Indicators NI: 4, 6 & 7

